

Mrs. Sadako Ogata, President of JICA, Visits APCD Project



Mrs. Sadako Ogata

Mrs. Sadako Ogata, President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, was welcomed by Ms. Panita Kambhu, Director-General of Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups for a brief visit to APCD on 18 June 2005. Mr. Eiji Hashimoto, Deputy Vice-President of JICA and Mr. Satoru Kohiyama, Director General accompanied Mrs. Ogata.

Mr. Monthian Buntan, APCD resource persons and Prof. Akiie Ninomiya, Chief Advisor, APCD Project gave presentations on APCD's mission to empower persons with disabilities.

Members of the 3 pioneer Independent Living Groups in Thailand met with Mrs. Ogata to share their experiences due to her keen interest in human security which is a priority issue for JICA.

Ms. Akiko Fukuda, an expert on independent living stated "We change society to be friendly for all; PWDs do not need to change for society."



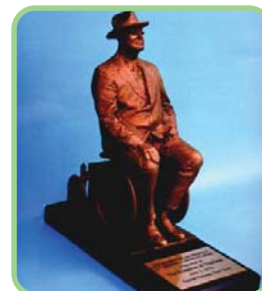
IL participants and APCD staff

The Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability

The Foundation of Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (FAPCD) was established on 7 November 2004. In 2001, the Royal Thai Government received the Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award for the outstanding implementation on disability activities. The award of \$50,000 and a FDR bronze bust were presented to HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. Due to the initiative of this project HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presented the Award token to FAPCD to support APCD activities.



Objectives of FAPCD are
1) to support APCD's activities
2) to promote and further develop training implementation for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific region and 3) to promote and further develop training implementations for human resources of disability-related governmental, non-governmental, and other related-organizations in Asia and the Pacific region.



For further information and contributions of FAPCD, please contact info@apcdproject.org.

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APCD Human Resources Development Follow-ups

Mission to Viet Nam

From 29 March to 5 April 2005, APCD dispatched a Mission to Viet Nam, visiting Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, and Danang. The main objective of the Mission was to monitor the post-training activities of the Vietnamese participants in the following fields:

- Accessible Web-based Information Networking (WBN)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Visually Impaired Persons (VIP)
- Comprehensive Approach to Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR)
- Capacity Building of Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD)

From APCD's inception until April 2005, APCD has trained more than 60 Vietnamese, respecting Viet Nam as an important target country. Through interviews and visits with former participants at their organizations, the Mission found the following major outcomes:

Accessible WBN and Effective Trainers of ICT for VIP



Former ICT Training Participant

The APCD WBN Training is designed for participants to learn information networking and accessible web-site production in order to be a source of information. One participant from the Disability Forum has been successfully developing a web-site to be more accessible for users with visual impairments, etc. and also facilitating information network among the Forum members as a web-master.

When APCD organized the first "training for trainers" for ICT for VIP in 2004, targeting computer teachers for the blind and equipping these teachers with pertinent knowledge/skills on various software and assistive devices, APCD selected two participants from Viet Nam; one sighted participant from the Viet Nam Blind Association in Hanoi and one blind participant from Bung Sang Institution for the Blind in Ho Chi Minh City. The Mission visited their organizations to conduct post-training interviews, to see how they developed their expertise and became more knowledgeable and skillful "trainers" on ICT for VIP. They have been sharing their knowledge/skills at their respective organizations with local blind persons regularly as well as training sighted persons to teach blind students more effectively.

Nowadays large cities in Viet Nam, more organizations and schools for the blind are beginning to teach

computer skills in order to help more blind citizens educationally for future employment. Although still limited, ICT for VIP, and especially computers, have become more affordable, and are a prerequisite for higher education and office work for blind persons. Former APCD training participants have been pioneers leading this movement; APCD will further develop human resources, which can help social participation of VIP via ICT.

Strengthening CBR through a Social and Comprehensive Approach in Danang

APCD's CBR Training aims to facilitate social inclusion of PWD through their participatory process in CBR and supports covering various aspects of life of PWD. Although CBR has been greatly promoted in Viet Nam, APCD believes that it can be further strengthened through a social and comprehensive approach. Through the monitoring of the former CBR participants from 2003, APCD strategically targeted Danang province in 2004, inviting 6 medical professionals (e.g., medical doctors, nurses, physio-therapists) responsible for their CBR program. Through the post-training interviews, the Mission confirmed that their pro-medical paradigm for CBR changed to pro-social after



Former CBR Participants' Meeting

the APCD training, stressing the importance of social inclusion of PWD and a "bottom-up" approach. Some who work as CBR trainers, modified their CBR training materials covering social awareness, income generation, SHG of PWD, etc. and improved the training methods to become more participatory.

The Mission was also invited to meetings and activities of SHG of PWD, supported by some former participants. It was an excellent first step to utilize the collective power and participation of PWD for strengthening CBR while it was observed that the APCD HRD Program, the SHG Training in particular, would be able to help Vietnamese further develop effective SHG of PWD at the grass-root level.

Self-help Movement throughout Viet Nam

In cooperation with the Government Focal Point, the National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD), APCD organized a 5-day Regional Seminar for CBSHOD in Hanoi in December 2004, inviting 25 national leaders with disabilities from Asia-Pacific countries and 30 local participants from throughout Viet Nam. APCD emphasized a participatory planning process and raised awareness on



**Former CBSHOD
Participants' Meeting**

the significance of empowering PWD, by involving as many as Vietnamese leaders with disabilities in the Seminar's Organizing Committee.

The post-training activities of local participants were monitored by the Mission through a half-day meeting in Hanoi and respective interviews in their organizations. According to their feedback of the CBSHOD Seminar in

which most of the resource persons were also PWD from developing countries, it was an eye-opening event for the Vietnamese, shifting their paradigm from a charity approach to one of supporting and empowering PWD. Through the Seminar, participants could learn good practices of self-help activities, further develop their leadership skills, and were motivated to empower other PWD. In short, the participants could gain knowledge and spirit, and establish attitudes and a basic capacity for the self-help movement. Since the CBSHOD Seminar, new SHGs of PWD have been initiated throughout Viet Nam and a movement to organize a cross-disability national federation of SHG of PWD is emerging.



Mission to Myanmar

An APCD Mission visited Yangon, Myanmar from 5-8 June 2005 in order to further develop a cooperative relationship with the Government Focal Point, the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), and to monitor and follow-up on the former training participants. APCD primarily conducted post-training monitoring interviews with the participants from 2004 in the following fields:

- Capacity Building of Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (CBSHOD)
- Initiating Self-help Groups (SHG) of People with Disabilities (PWD)
- Social and Comprehensive Approach to Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR)

As a target country, APCD has encouraged Myanmar to strengthen the community and rights-based approaches to support people with disabilities and accommodated more than 20 persons in relevant APCD training courses. The Mission appreciated the following progress in Myanmar.

Cooperative Relationship with the APCD Government Focal Point and JICA Office

DSW, as the Government Focal Point, has been cooperating with APCD in the recruitment and follow-up of participants. Through a meeting with the Mission, the

Director-General of DSW and other Executives further deepened their understanding of the significance of cooperation between the Government and NGO including disabled people's organizations for the empowerment of PWD.

The Mission organized a half-day follow-up seminar in cooperation with DSW and the JICA Myanmar Office. The JICA Office modified the building entrance to make it accessible for participants using wheelchairs, offered the seminar venue and encouraged post-training activities by introducing its NGO Center (e.g., meeting space, computer) for their usage.

In the follow-up seminar, 14 former participants shared their achievements and issues that they encountered after returning from their training. The seminar culminated in having comments and suggestions by APCD Resource

Persons, who included a deaf Thai person and person with a physical disability with rich self-help experiences, leading the Asia-Pacific regional movement on disability.



Meeting with Director General of DSW

Self-help Groups/Organizations (SHG/SHO) Initiated/Strengthened by Former Participants

APCD invited 6 participants with 2 interpreters for the SHG Training in Thailand and 1 participant for the CBSHOD Training organized in Hanoi, Viet Nam in 2004. The SHG Training was for initiators of SHG of PWD at the grass-root level for sustainable community development to deepen their understanding of poverty, development and disability; the CBSHOD Training targeted national leaders with disabilities and helped develop/strengthen a national cross-disability federation for effective policy advocacy.



Former participants

The Mission was successful in monitoring 7 participants for the SHG and SHO Training and found that the following SHG and SHO had been initiated or further strengthened by former APCD training participants:

- Myanmar Disabled People's Organization
- Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association
- Yangon Association of the Deaf
- Raise-up Persons with Disability Groups (Yangon)
- Deaf Youth Development Center (Mandalay)
- Pyin Oo Lwin Self-help Group (Mandalay)

Former participants with disabilities who had been empowered through the APCD training courses have been empowering other people with disabilities at the national as well as grass-root community level.

Mainstreaming Disability Issues in Area Development Programs: CBR and SHG of PWD

Three Myanmar staff of World Vision, their Health Advisor and Community Development Facilitators, participated in the APCD CBR Training in 2004. Despite their partial participation as self-sponsored participants, they were active and leading participants.

Through the post-training interviews, the Mission appreciated that they had applied their learning in their field practice and shared relevant knowledge with their colleagues and community people. A participant from Mandalay, for example, has become a more effective supporter for income generation and developing SHG of PWD, utilizing her learning from the APCD Training.

APCD visited one of the "Area Development Programs" in a township near Yangon, where CBR has been implemented as part of the Program and one of the former participants is responsible for it. Although the CBR has not yet fully matured, the Mission was pleased to observe that many community people were motivated to join CBR and enjoyed their community work thanks to excellent facilitation by the former APCD participant.

Since World Vision recently started long-term "Area Development Programs" throughout Myanmar, with comprehensive community development being pursued by people in their respective communities in phases of a 15-year project and disability issues will be mainstreamed through CBR. The former APCD training participants have been and will be greatly contributing to the disability-related community development.



World Concern CBR Project



Mission to Cambodia

The APCD dispatched a Mission to Cambodia from 22 to 25 June 2005 in order to monitor/follow up former participants of APCD training and gather updated disability information.

Amazingly, APCD has already trained 27 officers in organizations of/for persons with disabilities through 8 training courses since 2002. Nearly half of them are PWDs with a keen commitment to their work; APCD was looking forward to seeing their activities.



Cambodia Former Participants' Meeting

The mission team visited 2 focal point organizations: 1) the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veteran and Youth Rehabilitation, and 2) the Disability Action Council (DAC), and mainly discussed the recruitment system in order to fully utilize the human resources trained by APCD.

The mission team also visited 6 associate organizations where many former APCD training participants were working.

Ms. Ma Layna, Association of the Blind Cambodia (ABC), a former participant of the ICT for Visually Impaired Persons (VIPs) 2004, is actively working for computer training for VIPs. She is teaching 4-6 VIPs in the morning and evening computer classes and is also responsible for Braille and the talking book library. Her efforts and character must be a great asset to ABC and blind friends in Cambodia. APCD hopes that many blind friends will be empowered by her computer classes.

Ms. Em So Chanda from Krousar Thmey in Battambang, is also a former participant of ICT for VIPs. Krousar Thmey has 120 deaf as well as blind students from Grades 1-9. Ms. Chanda is in charge of computer classes for visually impaired students and teaches basic computer skills by using a screen reader. She said many blind students are so eager to study computer and ask many questions which she cannot always answer.

** Any disability-related news is welcome to be included in our newsletter. Please submit your news to us!!*

The mission team also followed up activities of former participants of a self-help group of PWDs.

The mission team also joined an APCD Alumni Group Networking Meeting at the National Center of Disabled Persons (NCDP) organized by former APCD training participants. Ms. Yin Mom, from Action on Disability and Development, a former participant of SHG training, was the facilitator of the meeting. APCD was so pleased to learn about the significant SHG, CBR, ICT and Networking activities from 12 former training participants. Six objectives of the networking meeting included the importance of collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and DAC, both APCD focal point organizations.



As a mission outcome, APCD was able to learn about the activities of the focal and associate organizations of APCD.

Disability Action Council (DAC) is being restructured emphasizing a national plan of action, an employment policy, and CBR program, etc.

JICA Cambodia is also putting a priority on disability issues. They consider promotion of social participation as well as development of a legal framework for PWDs very important. Strengthening disabled peoples' organizations and capacity building of persons working for PWDs are also essential. APCD is looking forward to seeing fruitful collaboration among NGOs, GO and JICA.

The Youth Invitation Programme The Japan-ASEAN Friendship Programme Components Social Welfare (Welfare Administration for People with Disabilities)

Today's youth will be our future leaders. The Youth Invitation Programme established in 1984, aims to build relationships and respect between youth from various countries and Japan. It provides an opportunity for youth to study Japanese culture and exchange experiences in related fields.



**Phatcharamont Phanthong
APCD Information Support Officer**

The Youth Invitation Programme The Japan-ASEAN Friendship Programme Components Social Welfare (Welfare Administration for People with Disabilities) organized by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), International Hospitality and Conference Service Association (IHCSA) and World Youth Friendship in Tokuyama was held in Japan from 25 May - 16 June 2005. This year's program consisted of 25 youth from 8 countries; Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam. All youth were representatives from disability-related organizations including Ms. Phatcharamont Phanthong, APCD's Information Support Officer.

This year's program was divided into 3 parts; 1) learning the Japanese culture and language in Osaka, 2) field visits to disability-related organizations for instance, Tokyo Metropolitan Welfare & Health Bureau, Japan College of Social Work, Tokyo Metropolitan Katsushika School for the Deaf, Tokyo Metropolitan Nakano School for the Physically Handicapped, and National Rehabilitation Center

for Persons with Disabilities, and 3) exchange programs on the Japanese history and culture with Japanese Youth at Shunan City, Yamaguchi Prefecture.

There were positive outcomes since the participants were able to understand the procedures of disability-related projects in Japan by visiting various organizations and listening to presentations of social welfare projects for PWDs.

An In-house Seminar was also organized from 3-5 June 2005 for the youth to exchange their experiences on disability issues with 25 Japanese youth.

Apart from all the experience and knowledge received from this program, the ASEAN youth were also impressed with the warm welcome of the organizers and the organizations visited including the volunteer interpreters.

APCD as a center for disability in the region will continue to further collaborate with the Youth program especially exchanging information with all related partners.



Youth Participants Year 2005

Regional Training Workshop on Capacity Building for PWDs: Towards a Rights-based Society in the Asia-Pacific Region and the 9th DPI Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly

The Regional Training Workshop on Capacity-Building for Persons with Disabilities: towards a Rights-based Society in the Asia-Pacific Region was held at the Prince Palace Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand from 10-13 April 2005. It was followed by the 9th Disabled Peoples' International Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly on 14 April 2005. Approximately 60 delegates from 22 countries in the Asia-Pacific Region participated.

Mr. Wanlop Phloytabtim, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand presided over the Opening Ceremony. He stated that the Thai Government emphasizes the equality, rights and dignity of all people, especially persons with disabilities who are protected by the 1991 Rehabilitation Act of the Disabled.

Sessions focused on the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific; the bi-directional relationship between poverty and disability as well as women with disabilities. It emphasized that women with disabilities should be given more opportunities to come forward in their national Disabled Peoples' Organizations; role models should be highlighted and women's movements should be linked with mainstream women's movements both at the national and international levels.

Ms. Venus M. Ilagan, Chairperson of Disabled Peoples' International, gave a presentation on the current status of the Convention and stated that it could be strengthened if people with disabilities would attend the



Mr. Wanlop Phloytabtim, Delegates, and Distinguished Guests

ad-hoc meetings more regularly and if the national delegation had representation of people with disabilities.

Some critical issues discussed included:

- Communication.
- Conventions, the BMF
- Strengthening the Regional Office
- Mentoring and Networking
- Training and strengthening of the National Assemblies
- Diversity
- Reference tools, employment, education and
- Monitoring

This was followed by a short analysis of the regional needs of the Asia-Pacific Region.



Summary of the Bangkok Declaration

The representatives of 22 national disabled peoples' organizations in the Asia-Pacific Region who attended the Regional Training Workshop on Capacity Building for Persons with Disabilities declared that capacity building and strengthening their organizations are critical to empower people with disabilities.

This assembly recognizes the following issues are high priority issues:

1. Poverty is a consequence and cause of disability.
2. To accelerate the implementation of the seven targets of the BMF.
3. Further recognized that the empowerment of girls and women with disabilities must be a primary concern of DPI.
4. The DPI Asia-Pacific Region wishes to further contribute to the development of our disabled peoples' organizations. We recommend the Asia Pacific Development Centre on Disability to become an autonomous body, so that people with disabilities can participate in decision-making.



APCD Project Activities

APCD Activities in Brief (April - June 2005)

For the second quarter of 2005, APCD has continuously implemented various effective activities towards empowerment and a barrier-free society for persons with disabilities in the Asia and Pacific region.

APCD is networking and collaborating with governmental and non-governmental organizations in Pakistan for the preparation of the upcoming Regional Training Seminar on Capacity-building of Self-help Organizations of Persons with Disabilities that will be held in Pakistan in September.

APCD Human Resources Development program sent follow-up missions to Viet Nam, Myanmar, and Cambodia.

The APCD Information Support is researching on how to improve the disability-related information network in the region along with the APCD Information Resource Room.

In addition, APCD was honored with a visit by Mrs. Sadako Ogata, President of JICA, on 18 June 2005 during her official visit to Thailand. Mrs. Ogata acknowledged the APCD project activities and also met with a group of Independent Living members from the 3 pilot projects in Thailand who shared their experiences.

APCD is proud to announce the Grand Opening Ceremony of the APCD Building with HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn scheduled to graciously preside over the ceremony on 25 July 2005 (full details will follow in the APCD website and the 13th APCD Empowerment Newsletter.)



APCD activities in the next 6 months include:

July

- 4-19
- 11-15
- 25
- 28-29

- Regional Workshop on Accessible Web-based Information Networking (WBIN)
- Mission to Mongolia
- APCD Grand Opening Ceremony
- Seminar for South-to-South Cooperation for the Decades of People with Disabilities

August

- 1-5
- 17-21
- 21-24
- 9-31

- Mission to Fiji
- Mission to Sri Lanka
- Mission to Maldives
- Training of Initiatives of Self-help Groups of PWDs towards a Rights-based and Sustainable Community Development (SHG)

September

- 6-12
- 22-26
- 28-30

- Mission to Indonesia
- Regional Training Seminar on Capacity-Building of Self-help Organizations of PWDs in Pakistan (CBSHOD)
- Follow-up Mission to Malaysia

October

- 5-8
- 11 October - 3 November

- Follow-up Mission to Bangladesh
- Regional Workshop on Community-based Rehabilitation

November

- 15 November - 8 December

- Information and Communication Technology for Visually Impaired Persons (ICT for VIP)

December

- 10-29

- Follow-up Mission to India

Activities	July	August	September
Regional Workshop on Accessible Web-based Information Networking (WBIN)	4-19		
Mission to Mongolia	11-15		
APCD Grand Opening Ceremony	25		
Seminar for South-to-South Cooperation for the Decades of People with Disabilities	28-29		
Mission to Fiji		1-5	
Mission to Sri Lanka		17-21	
Mission to Maldives		21-24	
Training of Initiatives of Self-help Groups of PWDs towards a Rights-based and Sustainable Community Development (SHG)		9-31	
Mission to Indonesia			6-12
Follow-up Mission to Fiji			13-17
Regional Training Seminar on Capacity-building of Self-help Organizations of PWDs in Pakistan (CBSHOD)			22-26
Follow-up Mission to Malaysia			28-30
Activities	October	November	December
Follow-up Mission to Bangladesh	5-8		
Regional Workshop on Community-based Rehabilitation	11-3		
Information and Communication Technology for Visually Impaired Persons (ICT for VIP)		15 Nov-8 Dec	
Follow-up Mission to India			10-29

The United Nations and Disability

To be ready for the upcoming Sixth Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities on 1-12 August 2005 at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, APCD would like to share part of the article by Mr. Edoardo Bellando, Public Information Officer, United Nations Program on Disability, (published in the Development-Outreach Magazine, World Bank, July 2005) on "The United Nations and Disability".

Eighty percent of people with disabilities live in developing countries, which are less equipped to address their needs. All over the world, people with disabilities continue to suffer from discrimination and a lower standard of living. To address this situation, the United Nations has consistently promoted the full equality of persons with disabilities and their participation in the social, economic, and political life of their country. This concern is rooted in its founding principles, which are based on human rights, fundamental freedoms and the equality of all human beings.



In 1971, the United Nations' General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons and in 1975, the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons, which set the standard for equal treatment and equal access to services.

Growing international recognition of disability rights as a form of human rights led to the proclamation of the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981. The Year led to the adoption by the General Assembly of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (1982), a policy framework for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, which calls for international cooperation in support of equality and full participation in social life and development. The Assembly also declared the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, 1983-1992, and proclaimed 3 December as the International Day of Disabled Persons. Following this was the establishment of sub-regional Decades of Disabled Persons in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities adopted in 1993 was a major outcome of the Decade of Disability. This serves as a tool for policy-making and as a basis for technical and economic cooperation. This shows the transformation from the traditional welfare approach to disability towards a rights-based approach.

The United Nations Programme on Disability works to support the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in social life and development, to advance the rights and protect the dignity of persons with disabilities, and to promote equal access to employment, education, information, goods and services. The United Nations

Voluntary Fund on Disability is technical cooperation supporting innovative activities to put into practice. This Fund provides small grants to promote awareness of disability issues, exchanges of knowledge and experience, and dissemination of appropriate disability technologies. In accordance to this, the fund supports the participation of non-governmental organizations in the sessions of the committee drafting the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

The United Nations works with governmental, non-governmental communities, academic institutions and professional societies to promote awareness, compile international resources and build national capacities for a broad human rights approach to the issue. It also seeks to promote the disability perspective in mainstream development and human rights activities.

In this consequence, the United Nations General Assembly has reaffirmed its commitment to adopting and promoting effective public policies and a programme for persons with disabilities and has launched a process leading to the adoption of the first-ever convention on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.

From this, APCD will continue to support the intention of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention to Promote and Protect the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities towards the achievement of this highlighted convention.



Special Announcement

The Royal Thai Government awarded 6 scholarships to students with disabilities namely;

1. Ms. Salinee Kuakiatwong, Education Leadership
2. Ms. Ampapan Tanpiboon, Deaf Studies
3. Ms. Nantanoot Suwannawut, Human-Computer Interaction (APCD Information Support Officer)
4. Ms. Thanathat Chaiyanon, Computer Engineering
5. Ms. Sudarat Makeshine, Computer Science
6. Mr. Ekkachai Nasompong, Computer Science

The Royal Thai Government scholarships for persons with disabilities have been provided since 2001 to students who have various kinds of disabilities with a strong commitment to work for persons with disabilities. The objective of the scholarship is to promote education of persons with disabilities and to prepare human resources for disability development. After graduation, they must return and work as government officers in any area such as rehabilitation, education, communication, or technology.



Regional News

April - June 2005

1) Mechanism for People with Disabilities to Access the Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction Period 2006-2010 & Consultation for the Development of a Program to Support People with Disabilities Period 2006-2010

Viet Nam

March and April 2005

An American international consultant with a mobility disability, and a high level of expertise and experience in disability and poverty reduction was invited to facilitate the workshops and provide technical assistance for the drafting teams during the process of preparing documents for the programs.

(Source: Disability Forum)

2) A football team of persons with intellectual disabilities of SWID, Bangladesh participated in the Islamic Solidarity Games held in Saudi Arabia April 2005

3) Viet Nam Disabled Day 17 April 2005

4) Workshop on Internet Access in Vietnamese for the Visually Impaired UNDP Conference Room, Viet Nam 22 April 2005

This course helped people with disabilities to acknowledge the advantage of computer technology. A demonstration on several approaches in helping visually impaired people read information on computers in Vietnamese was presented. Technology in development was briefly presented to allow persons with disabilities to comment on these tools, to give organizations, journalists and researchers a chance to speak with persons with disabilities, see these tools in action and to promote networking in research in Access for All. Presenters of the workshop were from the National Centre for Technology Progress (MOST), Institute for Information Technology, Institute of Epidemiology, Sao Mai Computer Center for the Blind, and others.

5) International Conference on Disability Rehabilitation New Delhi, India 25-26 April 2005

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Rehabilitation Council of India held an international conference to discuss human resource development in disability rehabilitation issues in South Asian countries.

Countries that participated are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and India. They all have a substantial population of persons with disabilities and face similar problems. The conference focused on issues dealing with human resources development in the area of disability and other relevant issues and provided an opportunity for exchanging experiences, technologies, and to identify areas of bilateral and multilateral linkages.

(Source: www.dnis.org)

6) Annual General Meeting of the National Council and Election of the National Executive Committee of the Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled, Bangladesh 29 April 2005

7) Training on Computer Accessibility Katmandu, Nepal May, 2005

A former participant of APCD's Information and Communication Technology training course conducted a training course on an accessible and inaccessible website. This will be continued due to much interest.

8) Training and Workshop on Inclusive Education for the Government. Dhaka, Bangladesh May-June 2005

Primary School Teachers conducted workshops for primary school teachers in ten districts of southern and northern areas of Bangladesh.

9) DAISY for All Open Source Workshop Bangkok, Thailand 5-10 May 2005

This workshop was organized by the DAISY for All project (DFA) with support from the Thai Blind People's Foundation with 15 trainees from 8 disability-related organizations from 7 countries, namely, France, India, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. There were 6 persons with a visual disability and one person with a physical disability. The course consisted of lectures and hands-on work and a half-day seminar focused on ICT accessibility that introduced participants to key trends, standards, and guidelines that promote the critical goal of information access for all.

The main objectives were to become familiar with the AMIS DAISY Player and be able to carry out localization of

the software, to gain a strong understanding of ICT accessibility, one of the critical issues in the Digital Divide and a key to ensuring that no one is left out of the emerging information society.

**10) News Camerawoman Captures Colors of Lives of People with Visual Impairment
Delhi, India
7-13 May 2005**

Delhi-based news photographer Sipra Das put together an exhibition of 50 photographs held in the national capital's Lalit Kala Academy. Titled "Third Eye", the exhibition was not only remarkable for its simplicity but also for its approach to the commonality as well as uniqueness of the world of visually impaired people. DAS has compiled a book printed in Braille detailing these photographs. "Third Eye" will travel to Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Kolkata by this year end.

(Source: www.dnis.org)

**11) Information Accessibility Seminar
Bangkok, Thailand
10 May 2005**

Topics discussed were presented on Information Accessibility Standards and the Role of Accessibility in the Design of Disaster Preparedness and Warning Systems. Of particular importance were the broader benefits that result from the implementation of an accessible design. The speaker, Mr. Markku Hakkinen, has worked in the field of human factors and information accessibility for over 20 years. Presently, a member of the Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) for All Project, he also participates in the Multimedia Standards Activities of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and is Chair of the W3Cs Web Accessibility Initiative's Research and Development Interest Group.

**12) Inclusive Education Only Means to Combat Inequality Based on Disability Seminar
Lahore, Pakistan
16-17 May 2005**

Over 400 participants deliberated on the theme "Improving Schools for Social Inclusion." Experts from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka presented papers on different sub-themes of the seminar. Javed Abidi, APCD resource person, presented a paper on "Advocacy Initiatives for Inclusive Education: Leading a Policy to Make Education in India Disabled Friendly" to share the Indian experience. Recent policy initiatives, schools in the changing scenario, examples of inclusive schools, and challenges and opportunities for inclusive education were some of the topics discussed on the first day. On the second day, participants stressed the need for inclusive education and reiterated that it would not only improve the quality of education but also eliminate inequality. This event organized by the University of Punjab's Department of

Special Education looked at Pakistan's status in relation to disability and inclusive education. Participants called for efforts on different forums to initiate regional collaboration so that the experiences of individual countries can be shared at the regional level.

(Source: www.dnis.org)

**13) Regional Seminar on Inclusive Education
Lahore, Pakistan
16-17 May 2005**

Experts and activists from civil society organizations in South Africa brainstormed and initiated dialogue on how to bring children and youth with special needs and disabilities into the mainstream, for cohesive social inclusion. The seminar was organized by the University's Department of Special Education and is expected to generate new ideas with the confluence of stakeholders of the region, which share a similar social and political milieu.

(Source: www.dnis.org)

**14) Special View 2nd Training Course on Photography for People with Disabilities
Viet Nam
21 May 2005**

The Special View Training Course on photography for persons with disabilities was launched for the 2nd time by the Disability Forum, the Vietnamese Association of Photographic Artists (VAPA) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) aiming at empowering persons with disabilities through the development of their own creativity and at promoting volunteerism. The objective was to enable persons with disabilities to use photography as a way to communicate and represent themselves, since they are still often denied access to social integration, and are frequently considered different and thus marginalized. This is a project to overcome the barriers persons with disabilities often encounter and to highlight their great potential.

**15) International Children's Day
Trinh Hoai Duc Sporting Hall, Viet Nam
1 June 2005**

On International Children's Day in Hanoi, Viet Nam, organized in collaboration with the Nhi Dong Newspaper, the "Culture and Sport Festival" for children with disabilities included many activities such as the performing arts, a friendly football match for visually impaired and gave scholarships for children with disabilities.

**16) Gallaudet University and Howard University Graduate School to Sponsor International Conference on Deaf Women and HIV/AIDS in Africa
Gallaudet University Kellogg Center
10-12 June 2005**

The purpose was to increase awareness of the importance of reaching all segments of the African



population in the fight against HIV/AIDS. A special focus was to identify effective ways to reach and communicate with deaf women in Africa who have HIV/AIDS. Participants included representatives from deaf organizations, higher education institutions from the United States and abroad, government and non-governmental agencies, and public and private health organizations. Recommendations from the conference included the development of an agenda for combating the HIV/AIDS crises, particularly as it affects deaf women, including new and enhanced research initiatives and improved health care.

(Source: www.gs.howard.edu)

**17) Workshop on Accessibility
National Institute for Handicapped, Pakistan
13-14 June 2005**

**18) Zonal Meet on Proposed Integrated Education Scheme for Children, Youth with Disabilities
Mumbai, India
25 June 2005**

A regional consultative meeting was held in a bid to forge a relationship and seek opinions from across the spectrum for the implementation of a comprehensive statement by the Minister for Human Resource Development Arjun Singh in Parliament. Stakeholders and experts were brought together for inputs to fine-tune the provisions of the scheme and to discuss and come up with ways to

implement the proposed Integrated Education Scheme for Children and Youth with Disabilities.

19) Make Schools Barrier-Free; Focus on Inclusive Education for Disabled Children, India

The Ministry of Human Resource Development is committed to making all schools across the country disabled-friendly. The Board says, "Disabled students should have barrier-free access to all educational facilities and services in the school including hostels, laboratories and buildings. Also, special attention may be given for the availability of appropriate study material for persons with disabilities. Talking textbooks, reading machines and computers with speech software may be progressively introduced and made available. Steps may be taken to provide an adequate number of Braille books in the school library, support services like sign language interpreters, transcription services and a loop introduction system may also be progressively provided for hearing impaired students". Transportation is one of the key problems faced by students with a disability. Schools are urged to ensure "adequate and appropriate" transport facilities to help students with special needs. Admitting that teaching staff lacked training to handle needs of children with disability, the circular stresses on organizing in-service training programs in inclusive education at the elementary and secondary levels.

(Source: www.dnis.org)

**Regional News: Upcoming Events
July - September 2005**

**1) National Sport Competition for Persons with Disabilities 2005
Hanoi, Viet Nam
July, 2005**

This event is a pre-Paragames; the 10 Paragames sport games competing are swimming, running, weight lifting, ping-pong, badminton, chess, judo, rolling ball, tennis, and volleyball.

(For more information, please visit www.hanoimoi.com.vn)

**2) Workshop on Community-Based Rehabilitation and Poverty Alleviation of Persons with Disabilities
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
Bangkok, Thailand
5 July 2005**

**3) ILO/UNESCAP Round-table Session of Multi-national Companies on Hiring People with Disabilities
UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand
6 July 2005**

**4) 10th Session Thematic Working Group on Disability Related Concerns
United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok
7-8 July 2005**

**5) 4th National Training Courses in CBR for Program Coordinators
Bhopal, India
12-20 July 2005**

The 8 days intensive exercise is intended for Program Coordinators of organizations involved in development and disability initiatives, through community-based approaches. This course equips the participants with appropriate attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to plan, co-ordinate, and monitor a community-based initiative for persons with disabilities. The training will focus on a rights-based approach.

(For more information, please contact raghavb@actionaidindia.org)

**6) UNESCAP Workshop on Regional Follow-up to the Fifth Session and Preparation for the Sixth Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on an International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
Bangkok, Thailand
26-27 July 2005**

**7) Workshop on Disability Statistics and Measurement
UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand
September 2005**

**8) Day Track to Throung Pass
Nepal
22 September-6 October 2005**

In Nepal, the needs of persons with disabilities are often ignored both in the community and nationally. As a result, it is very difficult for persons with disabilities to access information about their human rights. Nepal Disabled Human Rights Center (DHRC-Nepal) is an NGO that focuses exclusively on the rights of persons with disabilities; they use the media and education to achieve this goal.

DHRC is organizing a 14 day trek to Throung Pass (Annapurna Region) for 12 persons with disabilities. Three objectives are to raise awareness of the potential of persons with disabilities to participate in society, to inform members of the communities that the trek passes through about the Human Rights of persons with disabilities and lastly, to raise the self esteem of persons with disabilities. The goals of the expedition are to empower persons with disabilities participating in the trek and to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities in their families, communities, and nationally.

**9) The World Health Organization (WHO) Announces
First-Ever International Forum on Community Mental
Health Services
30 September 2005**

WHO is launching the first ever global forum about community-based psychosocial rehabilitation services.

These rehabilitation services represent an alternative to psychiatric hospitals, and aim to provide local care to people with severe mental health disorders, including medication, psychosocial support, and rehabilitation activities. WHO encourages individuals, families, members of professional healthcare and non-governmental organizations and mental health representatives, and providers around the world to tell us about their range of experiences.

(Source: World Health Organization)



Editorial Message

We are privileged to be moving toward APCD's 3rd Anniversary with pride and unity in the Asia-Pacific region. We are pleased to have more collaboration and networking so more disability-related information can be shared. Your information forwarded to APCD encourages us to share with other stakeholders beyond our region. The increased subscribers to the APCD Empowerment Newsletter is indicative of the keen interest and concern to empower persons with disabilities in the Asia and Pacific region. With much appreciation for your continued support, the network will expand.

APCD Empowerment Newsletter
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